

Please add the following Claims.

15. (New) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the at least one oxidative stress factor is selected from the group consisting of IL-1, IL-6, IL-8, 8-isoprostaglandin, vascular cell adhesion molecule, and intracellular adhesion molecule.

16. (New) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the at least one oxidative stress is a reactive oxygen species.

17. (New) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the at least one oxidative stress factor is produced by at least one member selected from the group consisting of monocytes and lymphocytes.

18. (New) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v is administered by feeding the mammal in need thereof effective amounts of oatmeal gruel comprising the *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v.

19. (New) The method according to Claim 18, wherein at least 25 mL of the oatmeal gruel is administered to a mammal in need thereof each day.

20. (New) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v is administered is administered to a mammal in need thereof for a time period ranging from 3 to 6 weeks.

21. (New) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the mammal in need thereof is a heavy smoker.

22. (New) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the mammal in need thereof has at least one inflammatory disease or symptoms thereof.

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23. (New) The method according to Claim 22, wherein the at least one inflammatory disease is selected from the group consisting of atherosclerosis, cancer, rheumatic disease, and psoriasis.

24. (New) A method of increasing the levels of the fecal concentration of propionic acid in a mammal, comprising administering to a mammal in need thereof an effective amount of *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v.

25. (New) The method according to Claim 24, wherein the *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v is administered by feeding the mammal in need thereof effective amounts of oatmeal gruel comprising the *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v.

26. (New) The method according to Claim 25, wherein at least 25 mL of the oatmeal gruel is administered to a mammal in need thereof each day.

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27. (New) The method according to Claim 24, wherein the *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v is administered is administered to a mammal in need thereof for a time period ranging from 3 to 6 weeks.

28. (New) The method according to Claim 24, wherein the mammal in need thereof is a heavy smoker.

29 (New) The method according to Claim 24, wherein the mammal in need thereof has at least one inflammatory disease or symptoms thereof.

30. (New) The method according to Claim 29, wherein the at least one inflammatory disease is selected from the group consisting of atherosclerosis, cancer, rheumatic disease, and psoriasis.

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31. (New) A method of reducing the adhesion of monocytes to endothelial in a mammal, comprising administering to a mammal in need thereof an effective amount of *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v.

32. (New) The method according to Claim 31, wherein the *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v is administered by feeding the mammal in need thereof effective amounts of oatmeal gruel comprising the *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v.

33. (New) The method according to Claim 32, wherein at least 25 mL of the oatmeal gruel is administered to a mammal in need thereof each day.

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34. (New) The method according to Claim 31, wherein the *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v is administered is administered to a mammal in need thereof for a time period ranging from 3 to 6 weeks.

35. (New) The method according to Claim 31, wherein the mammal in need thereof is a heavy smoker.

36. (New) The method according to Claim 31, wherein the mammal in need thereof has at least one inflammatory disease or symptoms thereof.

37. (New) The method according to Claim 36, wherein the at least one inflammatory disease is selected from the group consisting of atherosclerosis, cancer, rheumatic disease, and psoriasis.

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

Claim 11 is amended, and Claims 15-37 are added. Support for the amendment is found at page 2, line 36, to page 10, line 12, and in the original claims. No new matter is believed to be introduced by the amendment.